



Get Ready Now! Weather Experts Predict “Above Normal” Hurricane Activity for 2003

Hurricane season starts June 1, and, once again, the Gazette staff has assembled a special Hurricane Edition for the residents of GTMO.

New and old residents will find such valuable information as first aid tips, where to tune for information, what to do with your pets and what supplies should be in your hurricane basket.

Top hurricane experts from National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) say the 2003 Atlantic hurricane season will likely have above normal levels of activity. The outlook calls for the potential of 11 to 15 tropical storms, with six to nine hurricanes, and two to four classified as major hurricanes (category 3 or higher).

Officials from NOAA and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) advised residents in Atlantic and Gulf Coast states to be prepared throughout the season, which runs June 1 through Nov. 30.

On average the Atlantic hurricane season brings 10 tropical storms, with six reaching hurricane strength and two of those classified as major. Above normal activity has been observed during six of the last eight Atlantic hurricane seasons, reflecting an overall larger number of tropical storms and hurricanes observed since 1995.



In September 1998, Hurricane Georges paid a visit to Guantanamo Bay. When he left, close a million dollars in damage had been to the base.

In 2002, there were 12 named storms, four of which became hurricanes - Gustav, Isidore, Kyle and Lili.

The possibility of an above normal Atlantic hurricane season is further reason to prepare now rather than waiting for the unknowns of the last minute rush

GTMO Weather Office Plays Key Role in Storm Preparedness

They predict the weather. You might say that’s a piece of cake in Guantanamo Bay since the weather is the same every day. Try telling that to the aerographers who man the Naval Atlantic Meteorology and Oceanography Detachment (NLMOD) on Leeward Point; especially during hurricane season.

NLMOD’s primary mission is to keep the public and the Navy Department updated on anything to do with weather and oceanography.

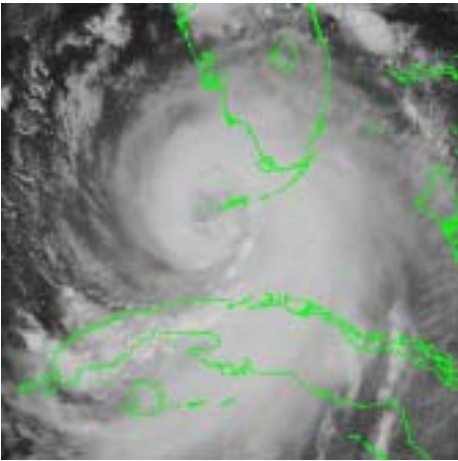
Most residents frequently check the weather channel and know that Guantanamo Bay averages a balmy 90 degrees during the day and a comfortable 70 degrees at night.

Locally, the coverage area is around

Guantanamo and the area covers Jamaica to the Windward Passage, but when the weather changes, as it does this time of year, our coverage area will expand from the Gulf of Mexico east to Africa.

Activity for NLMOD increases during the hurricane season. The weather office is manned 24-hours a day by the chief petty officer-in-charge, two forecasters and two observers upon the setting of Hurricane Condition III. Before Guantanamo’s weathermen begin their 24-hour test of endurance, they must first detect the storm.

Even though tropical storms and hurricanes may form in the Atlantic or Caribbean, the severe weather must overcome many obstacles to strike



Weather image of Hurricane George from the Florida Climate Center, Office of State Climatologist.

Guantanamo Bay.

A quick check of a topographical map of the Caribbean region shows mountains surrounding the base, and even higher mountains in Haiti and the Dominican

See Preparedness, page 6

GTMO Keeps Eye on the Weather

Hurricanes, by definition, are the final and most dangerous stage of cyclonic storms. They possess wind speeds of greater than 64 knots (74 mph) and are accompanied by severe and damaging weather.

The warm waters of the Caribbean, which surround Cuba, are often conducive to hurricanes. This is especially true during the summer and fall months.

June 1 was the start of hurri-cane season and it lasts until Nov. 30. Guantanamo Bay remains in a state of increased preparedness during this time.

As the base population is in a continuous process of turnover, an ongoing education program is required to maintain a high state of readiness. The yearly hurricane exercise is an example of this effort. However, many people check on board between exercises, while others simply fail to remember what they are expected to do.

Because of the potential threat to Guantanamo Bay by hurricanes, it is imperative that all base residents be familiar with the warning conditions and what to do

if the base is threatened.

The GTMO Destructive Weather Plan should be reviewed by all base residents in order to become familiar with hurricane conditions of readiness. Copies of this instruction are now provided as you move into family housing.

Guantanamo Bay is in Tropical Cyclone Condition IV (see page 8 for breakdown of the Tropical Cyclone conditions) from June 1 to Nov. 30, unless a storm threatens the base, causing an upgrading of the hurricane preparedness condition.

In 1998, Hurricane Georges passed over GTMO and the base sustained some high winds and damage. The base was fortunate not to have any injuries or casualties.

Being prepared means it's a good idea to



In 1998, Hurricane Georges swept through Guantanamo Bay. It produced sustained winds of 55mph with gusts up to 64mph.

have some safety rules to follow. Here are just a few.

Prior to a tropical storm/hurricane threat

- Know the location of your shelter if your housing is not hurricane-resistant.
- Know the safe haven for your boat.
- Know the conditions of readiness.
- Maintain your hurricane basket.

see *Eye on Weather*, page 12

Emergency numbers

Base Police
911/4105

o
Fire Department
911/4222

o
Emergency Room
911/7-2690

o
Base Operator
2200

o
Housing Trouble
Desk
5262

o
NAVSTA Quarterdeck
4453

Assemble Your Hurricane Basket

For those of you who aren't sure what to put in your hurricane basket, here is a good list to go by. Everyone should have a hurricane basket ready at all times.

It is a good idea to stock these items and keep them on hand for emergencies. In the event of an actual hurricane, a hurricane basket should already be assembled.

The basket should include:

- Enough canned, or other ready-to-eat food for 24 to 48 hours for you and your family, including items such as a can opener, disposable plates, cups, forks, knives, spoons, paper towels, napkins, bottled water, plastic drop cloth, and other items such as these.
- Minimum clothing, soap, toilet articles, and a towel for each member of the family.
- One blanket for each family member.
- Disposable diapers, baby formula and nursing supplies for infants.
- Batteries, flashlights, water containers, first-aid kits, safety matches, bandages, candles, portable battery-powered radio, wind-up alarm

clock and cooler.

- Nonessential, but desirable items may include small toys, reading material, playing cards, oil lamps/lamp oil, etc.
- A seven-day supply of all medications taken for chronic or acute medical conditions such as asthma, high blood pressure or heart problems.

- Moist towelettes
- Blankets
- First aid kits
- Safety matches
- Bandages
- Books, cards, nonelectric games
- Bag/basket large enough to carry everything

Do not take the following items to the hurricane shelter:

- Pets
- Alcoholic beverages
- Cooking utensils and equipment
- Valuables
- Electric games or devices
- Large toys
- Nonessential personal belongings

First Aid: Are You Prepared For Any Emergency

Hurricane preparedness means having a first aid kit and refreshing your emergency medical skills. During a hurricane, people are injured by flying debris. After the storm, shattered glass, broken tree limbs and fallen power lines may cause further injuries.

According to U.S. Naval Hospital GTMO personnel, you can either buy or make your own first aid kit and if you have to treat someone yourself, follow these guidelines:

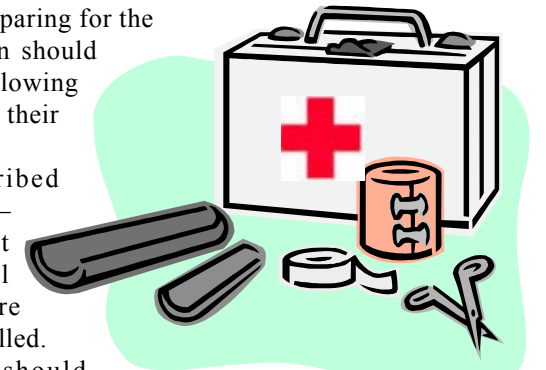
- Look the injured person over from head to toe; check for breathing, bleeding and broken bones.
- If necessary, first restore breathing. You can learn CPR and first aid at classes offered by American Red Cross-certified instructors. Call the Red Cross Office at 5060 to find out about upcoming classes.
- After breathing is restored, stop the bleeding. Apply direct firm pressure to the wound, with sterile gauze pads. Don't remove the gauze pads; just add new pads if the bleeding continues. Keep pressure on the wound. If the injury is on an arm or leg, elevate the limb. Tourniquets are used only as a last resort.
- Check for broken bones, or parts of the body that look deformed, for example: a dislocated shoulder. A temporary splint can be made by securing a rolled magazine or piece of wood to the affected limb with Ace wraps.
- Keep the patient warm to prevent shock.

The best way to treat an injury is to avoid getting it. Never touch downed electrical wires, even days after the storm. They may still be live. A line that you assume is dead may suddenly become live as workmen restore power. Don't go sight-seeing and stay away from windows. The high winds send glass, branches and other debris flying.

Residents preparing for the hurricane season should also add the following first aid items to their supplies:

- Prescribed medications – Ensure that personal prescriptions are up-to-date and filled. Asthmatics should consider a spare inhaler in addition to their asthma medication. Maintain enough prescription medication to last seven days, especially for heart problems, blood pressure, etc.
- Over-the-counter medications
- Eye glasses – an extra pair is good
- Electrolyte solutions
- Band-aids, rolled gauze, gauze pads and sponges
- Antiseptic solutions such as alcohol, iodine or peroxide
- pain relievers such as Tylenol
- Scissors
- Tape
- Supply of canned or powered baby formula
- 2 or 3 Ace bandages
- adhesive tape
- thermometer
- blanket to keep shock or hypothermia patients warm.

Being prepared is essential to survival during a major hurricane as well as any emergency.



Protect Your Pets During Hurricane Season

In the event of a hurricane, animals are not allowed in the base emergency shelters for public health and safety reasons. This means planning ahead is essential. There is no longer a pet hurricane shelter at GTMO.

Before hurricane season arrives, you should prepare a hurricane basket for your pet, too. These items include:

- pet carrier (required by regulation)
- collar (include leash for dogs)
- water for three days
- food for 3 days (about 1 - 5lb. bag)
- familiar toys and one towel or blanket

- food and water bowls (large/stable, not easily knocked over)
- cat litter and litter box (20-lb. bag of no scooping litter)
- medications

Remember these items will be needed to properly care for your animals in the event of an emergency. Make up a safe location for your pet at home.

- Prepare an area in your house that is away from windows, such as in a utility room or bathroom.
- Bring your pet inside. Never leave pets outside during a hurricane.
- Leave only dry foods that are relatively unpalatable to prevent overeating.

Do not leave any vitamins or mineral supplements; overeating them could cause salt poisoning.

Water should be left in bathtubs or other sturdy containers to prevent spillage. If your animal is on any special medication, consult the veterinarian for suggestions.

Separate your pets; animals who are usually friendly may become scared and fight each other.

Provide an area off the floor in case of flooding. When Hurricane Condition I is announced, all pet owners should immediately prepare the pet zone to weather the storm.

You have a limited amount of time to protect your pet before leaving with your family to go to your own shelter location.

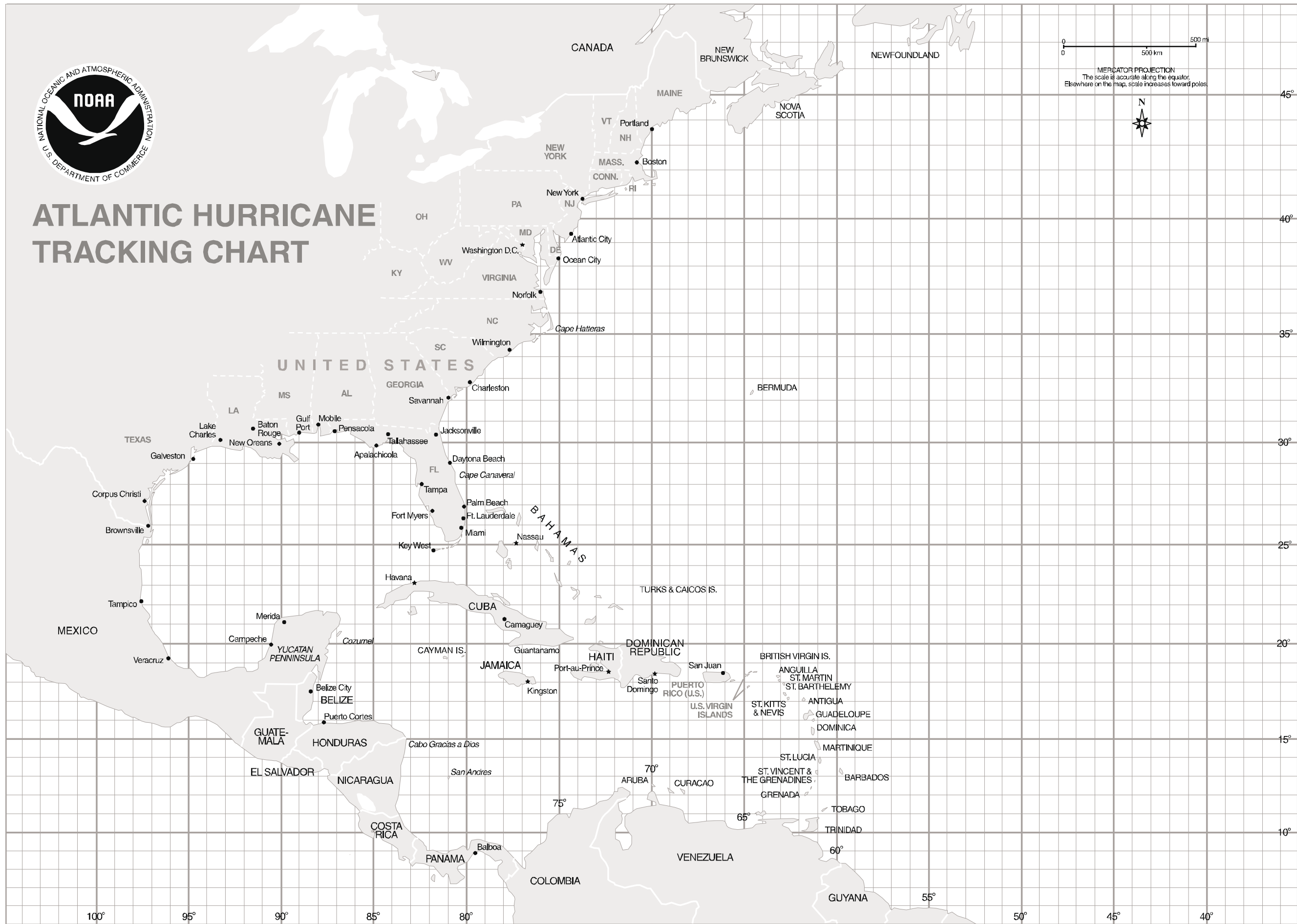
If your home is hurricane-resistant you have more time, but use it wisely.

The animal must be in a carrier (one pet per carrier), clearly labeled with the pet's name, owner's name and phone number. All pets must have items listed in the hurricane basket. Once the storm has passed and the All Clear is announced, pet owners in shelters should immediately return home to aid their pets in recovering.

For more information, call the vet clinic at 2101 or 2212.



ATLANTIC HURRICANE TRACKING CHART



2003 Storm Names ...

Ana	Kate
Bill	Larry
Claudette	Mindy
Danny	Nicholas
Erika	Odette
Fabian	Peter
Grace	Rose
Henri	Sam
Isabel	Teresa
Juan	Victor
Wanda	

Plot your own tracking map - Advisories are numbered consecutively for each storm and describe the present and forecast position and intensity of the storm. Hurricane advisories are issued at six-hour intervals, at midnight, 6 a.m., noon and 6 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time.

Bulletins provide additional information. Each message gives the name, eye position, intensity and forecast movement of the hurricane.

Hurricane eye positions are given by latitude and longitude, to the nearest one-tenth of one degree.

Eye positions may also be given as a statute mile compass direction from a specified point.

When you receive hurricane advisories, note the advisory number, eye position, intensity and forecast direction of movement. Then, make the eye position on the tracking chart.

Because hurricanes change direction very quickly, you should concentrate more on where the storm will go, rather than where it has been.

Tropical cyclones are not given names until they reach tropical storm stage. They are closed isobars, have rotary circulation and winds greater than 34 knots (39 mph).

Hurricanes typically form off the coast of Western Africa, the Western Caribbean or in the Gulf of Mexico and they normally track west or north.

Hurricanes - giant, spiral whirlwinds

Hurricanes are tropical cyclones in which winds reach speeds of 74 mph or more, and blow in a large spiral around a relatively calm center — the eye of the hurricane. Every year, these violent storms bring destruction to coastlines and islands in their erratic path.

Stated very simply, hurricanes are giant whirlwinds in which air moves in a large, tightening spiral around a center of extreme low pressure, reaching maximum velocity in a circular band extending outward 20 or 30 miles from the rim of the eye.

This circulation is counterclockwise in the Northern hemisphere, and clockwise in the Southern Hemisphere. Near the eye, hurricane winds may gust to more than 200 mph, and the entire storm dominates the ocean surface and lower atmosphere over tens of thousands of square miles.

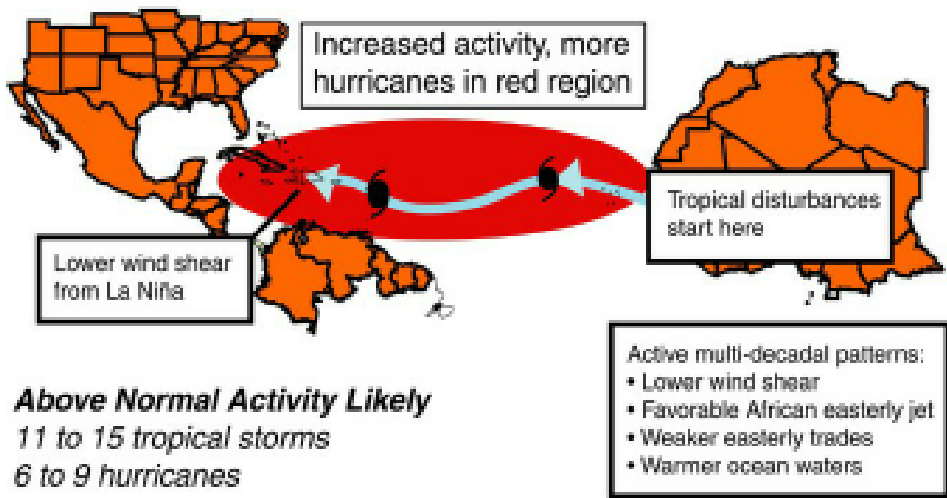
The eye, like the spiral structure of the storm, is unique to hurricanes. Here, winds are light and skies are clear or partly cloudy. But this calm is deceptive, bordered as it is by hurricane-force winds and torrential rains. Many people have been killed or injured when the calm eye lured them out of shelter, only to be caught in the hurricane winds at the far side of the eye, where the winds blow from a direction opposite to that in the leading half of the storm.

Hurricane winds do the most damage, but drowning is the greatest cause of deaths. As the storm approaches and moves across the coastline, it brings huge waves, raising tides some 15 feet or more above normal.

Waves and currents erode beaches and barrier islands, undermine waterfront structures, and wash out highway and railroad beds. The torrential rains produce sudden flooding, as the storm moves inland and its wind diminishes, floods constitute the hurricane's greatest threat.

Hurricanes begin as relatively small

Expected Conditions for 2003 Atlantic Hurricane Season



Above Normal chance: 65%
Near Normal chance: 35%
Below Normal chance: 10%

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce



tropical cyclones which drift gradually to the west-northwest (in the Northern Hemisphere), imbedded in the westward blowing tradewinds of the tropics. Under certain conditions these disturbances increase in size, speed, and intensity until they become full-fledged hurricanes.

The storms move forward very slowly in the tropics, and may sometimes hover for short periods of time. The initial forward speed is usually 15 mph or less. Then, as the hurricane moves farther from the equator, its forward speed tends to increase at middle latitudes, it may exceed 60 mph.

These great storms are driven by the heat released by condensing water vapor, and by external mechanical forces. Once cut off from the warm ocean, the storm begins to die,

starved for water and heat energy, and dragged apart by friction as it moves over the land.

The hurricanes that strike the eastern United States are born in the tropical and sub-tropical North Atlantic Ocean, the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico. Most occur in August, September and October, but the six-month period from June 1 to Nov. 30 is considered the Atlantic hurricane season.

On the average, six Atlantic hurricanes occur per year. However, there are significant deviations from this average. In 1916 and 1950, 11 hurricanes were observed, and no hurricanes were observed in 1907 and 1914. During 1893, 1950 and 1961 seasons, four hurricanes were observed in progress at the same time.

Perparedness, from page 1

Republic. Hurricane tracks generally follow a west-northwest pattern and when they hit the mountains, it takes away a lot of the storm's punch.

Any hurricane that comes within 180 miles is considered a storm that could cause damage to the base.

The most dangerous characteristic of a hurricane is the storm surge which can raise tide levels well above normal. A surge of more than eight feet would be very serious

in Guantanamo Bay. Fortunately the huge drop-off in water depth just outside the bay, severely cuts down the storm surge and protects the base.

The surge, however, could cause large swells in the bay and subsequent shoreline damage and erosion.

As a tropical storm or hurricane approaches, different conditions are set. NLMOD does not set these conditions. Instead, the office advises the Naval Base

Commander of the present weather conditions, hurricane approaches and on the different conditions. He then sets the conditions as appropriate.

Finally, NLMOD offers some advice to base residents on being prepared. They suggest you have an alternate source of power, have batteries for your flashlights and radio, put together a hurricane basket, and watch your televisions and listen to your radios.



Guantanamo Bay escaped Georges' fury with only property damage, a testimony to being prepared. Photo from the Gazette Photo Archives.

Is Your Housing Hurricane-resistant

The following information is provided to assist residents in determining whether their housing is hurricane-resistant. If you reside in nonhurricane-resistant housing, you are assigned a shelter. People in nonhurricane-resistant housing can also stay with a neighbor or friend who is in hurricane-resistant housing, but must first fill out a relocation memorandum for hurricane shelter reassignment with the Operations Department. Call 4704/4366 for more information.

Non-Hurricane-resistant Housing

Paola Point, Radio Point
Deer Point
Marina Point, Marine Site
Hibiscus Hollow

Assigned Shelter

Youth Center
BOQ Common
CBQ Common
Gold Hill Barracks

FM 103.1 - Update Central

Naval Media Center (NMC) Detachment's FM 103.1 is Guantanamo Bay's primary emergency broadcast station or EBS. The detachment and its radio transmitters have emergency auxiliary power which allow uninterrupted broadcast capability in the event of storm-related power outages.

Radio and television broadcasts are effective ways to communicate with large groups of people during weather emergencies because of both the

speed and efficiency of transmissions.

NLMOD (Naval Atlantic Meteorology and Oceanography Detachment) provides the NMC with weather reports and Tropical Cyclone conditions set by the base commander and we can turn around and pass it on to the community within seconds, if necessary.

In a severe storm, the radio station stays on the air as long as possible to pass on as much information to the community as

it can, as required by the base commander. So, make sure you have a portable radio and plenty of batteries.

During a hurricane, the radio becomes more than a source of information. Listeners can tune in and find out exactly where the hurricane is, what it's doing - they can even track it themselves using a hurricane tracking chart.

Should NMC lose its primary FM signal, emergency information will be broadcast on AM 1340.

Protect Your Home

There are ways to prevent damage to your home during a hurricane. Throughout the hurricane season, ensure all yards and work areas are free from loose debris, which could possibly become missile hazards during high winds.

Flashlights, hurricane lamps, candles and other sources of emergency lighting should be procured in case of power failure.

In the event Tropical Cyclone Condition I is set, move furniture away from doors and windows and store small items under a bed or in closets.

All lamps, fans and other small appliances should be unplugged, as well as large appliances, such as stoves, washers and dryers.

The only exception to this are refrigerators and freezers. These should be set at the coldest setting to help avoid food spoilage in the event of a power outage.

Make a careful inspection before appliances are reconnected or turned back on to ensure they're not wet or still in contact with water.

Following this simple procedure could prevent electrocution.

Pictures and paintings should be removed and stored in a safe place to prevent water damage.

Did You Know

1992's Hurricane Andrew remains the costliest U.S. hurricane in the past 100 years.

1998's Hurricane Georges, which passed through Guantanamo Bay, is sixth on the list.

Eye On Weather, *from page 2*

- Maintain several hurricane lamps with sufficient fuel or candles.
- Keep emergency cooking material available
- Provide means to store fresh water

When a tropical storm/hurricane threatens

- Trim dead wood from trees.
- Pickup and store loose objects in your yard, patio or working area.
- Check your medicines and first aid supplies.
- Check your stock of nonperishable foods and canned goods.
- Store water in a clean bathtub, sink and other containers.
- Fuel your car.
- Check your inventory of batteries for radio, flashlights, emergency lamps and emergency cooking material.
- Stay tuned to the EBS and TV channels 2, 4 or 6 for emergency broadcasts, official bulletins and announcements.
- If storms do come, move furniture to the center of the room or inside wall away from windows.

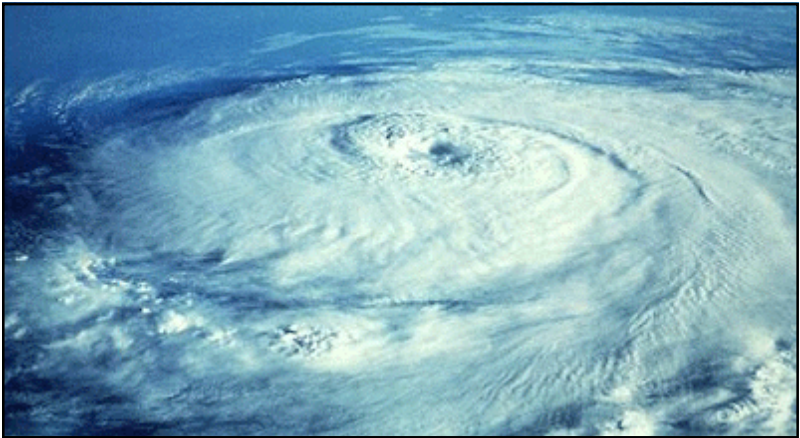
During a tropical storm/hurricane

- Do not go outside.
- Stay in your shelter until “all clear” is announced/signaled.
- Remain calm.
- When using lanterns, candles, etc. take precautions to prevent fires.

After the tropical storm/hurricane

- Use emergency lighting sparingly, it may take a while to restore power.
- Do not go near downed power lines.
- Do not go near disaster areas.
- Conserve water. If unsure about purity, boil for 5 minutes before using.
- Avoid frequent opening of the refrigerator and/or freezer to help keep the food cold.
- Do not eat cooked food that has not been refrigerated or canned goods that have been left open for a long time.
- Do not drive a vehicle, except in emergencies. The road may be washed out, covered with loose debris or otherwise impassable.

Remember your safety rules, listen closely to the television and radio, and reread this special edition. It could be the most important thing you do as you prepare for hurricane season.



Hurricanes technically come under the heading of “tropical cyclones,” but the West Indian definition “big wind” draws a better picture. These giant storms form over warm, tropical Atlantic waters. If they become organized, they are reclassified as a “tropical depression” and are assigned a number by the National Hurricane Center. If the winds grow to 40 mph, it is upgraded to a “tropical storm” and receives a name. When winds reach 75 mph, the storm officially becomes a hurricane.

Tropical Storm Conditions

The following are the Tropical Cyclone conditions established for Naval Station Guantanamo Bay. When Tropical Cyclone condition I, II or III are set, the information will be broadcast on radio station FM 103.1, the emergency broadcast station (EBS).

Tropical Cyclone Condition V

(June 1 through Nov. 30, set by COMNAVBASE Guantanamo Bay)

Normal readiness during hurricane season.

Tropical Cyclone IV

Set when winds greater than 50 knots force winds are possible within 72 hours.

Tropical Cyclone III

Set when winds greater than 50 knots are possible within 48 hours. Check nonperishable food supplies, fill water containers and secure all loose objects.

Tropical Cyclone II

Set when winds greater than 50 knots are expected within 24 hours. All emergency personnel report for duty and all base leave and liberty is cancelled.

All base personnel should stay tuned to the EBS for further instructions. Outdoor furniture, trash cans and other moveable objects should be moved inside or securely tied. Water cans should be cleaned in preparation for filling with water.

Tropical Cyclone I

Set when winds in excess of 50 knots are within 12 hours of the base. The base siren will sound a three-minute series of wails to indicate “take cover.” At this time, the ferry will be secured and all privately-owned vehicle traffic will be secured. Also, all nonessential personnel should proceed to hurricane shelters or hurricane-resistant housing. All preparations for Condition II should be complete by this time. Condition I will remain in effect until the “all clear” is passed.

When “all clear” is passed, all military and civilian employees should leave their shelters and report to work centers for muster and further instructions. All other base personnel will be allowed to return to their residences.

Tropical Wind Advisory. Winds associated with a tropical system, which produce gale force winds, will also impact base operations. These winds are not however regarded as “destructive”. A tropical Wind Advisory will be issued used when a sustained wind ranging from 34 to 50 knots (39 to 60 mph) generated by a tropical system is anticipated.

Tropical Wind Advisory COR III. Wind of 34-50 kts is expected within 48 hours.

Tropical Wind Advisory COR II. Wind of 34-50 kts is expected within 24 hours.

Tropical Wind Advisory COR I. Wind of 34-50 kts is expected within 12 hours or is imminent.